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A NEW YEAR'S GREETING

A radio talk by Dr. C. W. Warburton, Director of Extension Work, delivered through WRC and 39 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, January 3, 1931.

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Good wishes for the New Year, 4-H boys and girls. It is rather pleasant, after the holiday season, to face about toward plans for a new year, isn't it? Folks generally are looking back over their records to see where they made mistakes or acted wisely in the year that has just slipped into history. They are making all sorts of resolves about what they are going to put into this new year and what they hope to get out of it. I have been thinking that some such inventory-taking would be a good plan for 4-H club members. And this set me to pondering over what I should have gotten out of club work if we had had clubs when I was a boy.

I wonder what kind of an enterprise I should have gone in for. I am sure there would have been some livestock - a calf that would know and follow me about and perhaps pigs that would squeal with delight when I came around and present appreciative backs to be rubbed. And of course you know that every true Iowan likes to see the tall corn grow.

But there would have been other reasons why I should have wanted very much to belong to a 4-H club. For one thing, all of the other young people in the neighborhood would be in the club and I would be sure to hear them talk over their meetings, how boys I knew had made motions and argued points of difference. Probably I should have looked with half envious admiration at the older boys who had had experience in presiding at meetings and talking "from the floor." I should have wanted the good times at the 4-H camp and the matching of skill at the county fair. I should have enjoyed knowing boys and girls all over the county, - boys and girls who liked the things I did, country work, country sports, and country life, everything about the country.

How I should have enjoyed talking with these boys and girls about the things we liked or did not like, about plans we hoped to carry out some day, as well as about more mundane things. What we would have found in the good times that belong in the 4-H programs.

Now I am asking myself a question that is particularly appropriate for the beginning of this new year. Should I as a club member and the club to which I belonged have been merely a recipient of these good things? Laying aside for a moment the matter of material improvement, could we have worked together to accomplish something of permanent value that could not have been unless we did our part? I believe there were and are a number of such things. I'll tell you one that I am thinking of especially just now and then I should be glad if you would tell me some of your ideas.

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For a long time I have been puzzling over the question of difference between country and city. Lots of effort is being put into wiping out this difference, these days. So far as improvements are concerned, we all welcome them. And there are many valuable and enjoyable things which are possible only because we have cities. But are there not enjoyable and cultural things which belong particularly to the country? Should there not be a difference, an enjoyable difference, between city and country life? I do not mean a revival of old customs, attractive as many of them are. I mean possibilities for contribution to modern life, to the enjoyment, the beauty, the culture of tomorrow's world. What has the country to give?

I should like to think that 4-H club folks would be the ones to discover those inherent characteristics of the countryside which may be further developed into a distinctive contribution toward the enrichment of American life, a contribution equally as valuable as that of the city. I believe it will be done and I hope that 4-H club members will be the leaders in it. A prosperous and happy new year to you one and all.
